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TO THE
YEOMANRY OF NORFOLK.

*On their Petition, agreed to on
the 3d of January.*

Kensington, 8 January, 1823.

GENTLEMEN,

If it had not been for the noise made in St. Andrew's Hall, on the 3d inst. there would have been neither necessity nor excuse for my addressing you, on the subject of our Petition. The nation is too quicksighted, not to perceive how conscious our opponents must have been of the strength of our arguments and of the weakness of theirs, when that nation is informed, that we heard with the most profound silence all that they had to say; that we gave them no sort of interruption; that we suffered every word to be heard; and that the whole of their endeavours were used to prevent

us from being heard. The nation is too sensible and too just not to draw the conclusion, that we were in the right, and our adversaries in the wrong; and, moreover, that our adversaries knew that we were in the right, and that they were in the wrong.

However, my business at present is, to do that with my pen, which I was prepared to do by word of mouth, when I moved that petition, on which you stamped the honourable seal of your approbation. No man should present a document for the approbation of any body, much less for the approbation of a meeting like that at Norwich, unless he be prepared to show, by fact and argument, that such document is worthy of the persons for whose approbation it is presented. The person who presumes to present a paper under such circumstances, which paper contains one single allegation that he is unable to prove to be true, deserves the severest of censure. In his deductions he may be in error; but, even as to

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these, he ought to be able to show something in the way of argument, before he attempt to present such document. I am now, Gentlemen, about to show that I was not deficient in respect towards you; that I did not present for your approbation any thing untrue in point of fact, or unsound in point of reasoning. In short, I am about to show that your petition is such as to challenge any gainsayers that shall have the boldness to arise.

Before I enter upon this matter, I will insert here, for the information of all those who were not present at the meeting, the *Narrative*, which I published in London upon my return to that capital from the meeting. I will also insert my account of the conduct of the London press, which account was published on Monday last; having done these, I shall then proceed to the examination of our petition *point by point*; and, when I have done that, I shall, in your name and behalf, fling it down before the advocates of the jews and jobbers; before all the tribe of scribes, who uphold and who live upon corruption; and shall bid them take these points, one at a time, and show, if they are able, that we have prayed for any thing which is not just, which is not necessary,

which is not strictly agreeable to the laws of the land, to the well-being of the nation, and to every principle upon which the government of England is founded.

NARRATIVE OF THE MEETING.

Since my arrival in London (Saturday ten o'clock) I have seen an article in the *Old Times* newspaper, containing, as usual, a string of falsehoods, misrepresentations, and calumnies, from which it seems this vile paper cannot abstain, even when it is giving an account of the most serious and important matters, which concern, and must concern, every class of its readers, because they concern closely every description of persons in England.—I must confine myself to narrative; for to give speeches here is wholly out of the question. Of speeches, worthy of the name, either in length or matter, there were none. It was well known in the county, that it was my intention to be present at the meeting. It was naturally supposed that I should do something upon such an occasion. Therefore, some parties, whom I do not choose to name at present, and who, I trust, will become heartily ashamed of their conduct, had *actually hired loose young fellows and boys* to place themselves in different parts of the immense Hall where the meeting was held, with instructions to prevent me from being heard. They had so much pay in hand; and each was to have an additional sum if they succeeded in the enterprise. Of these facts I was

positively assured, before I left Norwich. However, as the reader will have the satisfaction to see, though the project of *silencing* succeeded to a great extent, that success did not in the smallest degree prevent my ultimate intention, and, indeed, the reader will find, that the triumph of truth and justice was rendered more conspicuous, more marked, and the promulgation of them of greater importance to the country by these unmanly, and I must say, base attempts.—The meeting was held in St. Andrew's Hall, and, by those accustomed to estimate numbers in that spacious place, there were supposed to be *seven thousand* persons present; being, I believe, by far the most numerous county meeting ever witnessed in the county. The main body consisted of landowners and land-occupiers. There might be a fifth part, possibly, citizens of Norwich; and then there might be in the whole, from a hundred to a hundred and fifty of the hired men and boys before-mentioned.—I, who had a good opportunity of judging of the situation in life of the persons at the meeting, should think that three-fourths of the persons who came under my eye, were farmers and farmers' sons. At the upper end of the Hall, a pretty spacious hustings was erected, where were the High Sheriff, his Under Sheriff, Mr. Coke, Mr. Wodehouse, Sir Thomas Beever, and other principal gentlemen of the county. Upon this hustings I went and took my station; and before I proceed further, it is necessary to inform the reader, how I came to do this, instead of being amongst the crowd below, as was my inten-

tion, and, above all things, my wish. There was a Committee appointed from amongst the signers of the requisition, to draw up resolutions and a petition for the occasion. A copy of these resolutions had, through the means of a friend, reached me before I left London. These resolutions appeared to me to be quite inadequate to the exigency of the case. I, therefore, drew up a petition (the reader will see it below) such as I thought ought to emanate from this great county. The moment I arrived at Norwich, I sent for a gentleman belonging to the committee, put the petition into his hand, and said to him, "Take this, propose it to the Committee to adopt it; say not who is the author of it, and I pledge you my word, that if they receive it, it never shall be made known by me that I am the author of it; but, tell the Committee at the same time, that the person who has put this into your hands is resolved to move it himself if they do not; and, that they may be prepared with arguments for setting it aside if they can, they may keep the petition in their possession until to-morrow, an hour before the meeting."—Soon after this, I learnt that there was very little probability of the Committee's adopting the petition; indeed, it was decided that they would not. I then gave another copy of the petition to another gentleman, that he might show it to any friends that he chose. During the evening (Thursday) there were probably fifty amongst the principal yeoman of the county that did me the favour to call upon me. To some of these I read the petition; to others I stated the

contents; so that, before the meeting took place, a pretty perfect knowledge of the contents of the petition existed amongst the great body of the farmers. To only one single person did I make any request of any sort respecting the petition; and that was to Mr. Heagren Gibbs, a gentleman of great respectability, and, as it happens, a tenant of Mr. Coke; but a gentleman of talent, too; and to him I made the proposition, *not to second* the petition; but, to second it if he should prefer it, when he came to the meeting, to the propositions which the other gentlemen had prepared and intended to bring forward. So scrupulous was I with regard to this, that I only requested Mr. Gibbs to be near me, and to second me, if, upon hearing both, he should prefer my proposition. Equally scrupulous on his part, he declined seeing the petition or hearing it read, until he came into the Hall.—We are now proceeding to the scene of action. Not far from the entrance of the Hall, I was met by Sir Thomas Beever and a very worthy gentleman of Lynn, whose name is Ayre. The Committee it appeared had agreed upon seven Resolutions to be moved. The six first not to include Reform of Parliament. These were to be moved by Mr. Alderman Thurtell and to be seconded by Mr. G. Watson. The resolution relating to Reform, was to be moved by Sir T. Beever and seconded by Mr. Ayre. These gentlemen, just before I entered the Hall, wished to know in what manner I meant to proceed; or, rather, at what stage of the business I meant to introduce my motion. They seemed to think

that it would be best for me to stop till all the resolutions had been moved and carried *seriatim*. To this I objected; not on my own account, but because it would be making the meeting, if they adopted my proposition, undo all that they had been doing, and, of course, would expose them to a charge of inconsistency; and I was resolved to lose my motion altogether, rather than do any thing that could by possibility throw a slur on the character of such a meeting. I therefore told them that the course that I should pursue would be to read my petition as soon as the *first* resolution had been moved and seconded: and that when I had read it, I should move to leave out all the words of the first resolution, except the word *resolved*, and to put in their stead, "That the Petition now read be the Petition of this Meeting."—Thus, at every stage of the business, my conduct was fair, open, and abundantly explicit.—I remembered the charge of taking the Meeting *by surprise* in Kent; and I was resolved to have to appeal to all these witnesses to prove, that, if my petition should be carried, no man should say that it was carried by surprise. The meeting was opened in the usual way; the four first Resolutions were read through; then the first was moved by Mr. Alderman Thurtell, seconded by Mr. Watson, and supported in a brief but very neat speech by Mr. Coke, who, at the beginning of his speech, took occasion to observe that he never had attended any meeting with so much pleasure in his life. Then came Mr. Wodehouse, who dissented from the whole of the Resolutions.

The reader who takes time to consider the noise necessarily made by the movement of shoes and by the pressings backward and forward, and the little murmurings of complaint by seven thousand persons assembled under one roof, all desirous of being nearest to the speakers; any person who takes time to consider these things must know how difficult it must have been for a person standing at some distance from the speaker (both being upon the hustings) to hear what he said. The meeting was perfectly orderly at this time; yet not one single word could I gather of what fell from the mover and seconder, and very little of what fell from Mr. Coke. This was not the case, however, with regard to the meeting; who faced the speakers, and a great part of whom could hear them very well. Mr. Wodehouse, however, who was separated from me only by Sir T. Beevor, I could hear very distinctly. He said little; but that little was of importance in two respects; first, as to the matter, and second, as to the manner in which a part of it was received. This gentleman has been grossly and most basely traduced in a second edition of a paper called the *British Press*. He is there represented as having made an exaggerated statement of the injurious effects of Mr. Peel's Bill. He is charged, also, with coming forward as "*an advocate for the absurdities of Cobbett*." The fact is, Mr. Wodehouse spoke in a most temperate manner concerning the effects of Mr. Peel's Bill; and so far from advocating what this silly newspaper calls the absurdities of Cobbett, Mr. Wodehouse protested most solemnly

against any such reduction of the debt as that which I have always contended to be necessary. Mr. Wodehouse did, however, draw forth that which was singularly calculated to give the said Cobbett a great deal of pleasure. In *defending Mr. Peel* against the charges of having produced so much mischief in the country, he observed that the Ministry were not aware of what they were about; that Mr. Peel was not aware of the mischief he was about to do; that the Parliament *did not foresee* the effects of the measure. At this moment, a young farmer out in the crowd, said, "there was one man that did foresee it, and foretel it too, and there he is (pointing to me)!" Immediately after this, a man who appeared to be a journeyman mechanic pulled an old and dirty *Register* out of his pocket containing a *Letter to Tierney*, and held it up in a half-rolled form, smiling in Mr. Wodehouse's face. It was worth going a hundred miles and back again to hear and see this. These were the *answers* which the sensible county of Norfolk gave to the attack which their county member had made upon me in the House of Commons, and to the attack still more unwarrantable which he had made on that excellent nobleman, Lord King. However, Mr. Wodehouse, in the course of his short speech, *threw the whole blame upon Mr. Ricardo*; and said, that he thought that something like what was proposed by Mr. Western ought to be adopted. The people laughed; but this was not the grand fit of laughter. Mr. Wodehouse elicited one laughing bout worth going, not a hundred, but a thousand miles to hear. In

adverting to that part of the resolutions of Mr. Thurtell, which called for such a reduction of the national debt and taxation as would give the farmers relief; he said, "Gentlemen, no man of common understanding can believe that such reduction can take place without endangering that institution which has been extolled by two of the greatest statesmen that ever lived (*Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox*), I mean the **SINKING FUND**." Has the reader ever seen that laughable farce called the *Wags of Windsor*, and particularly that part where Paddy and the Yorkshire Bite are bothering Mr. Deputy Bull? Has he ever heard a crowd of girls laughing at a hop-picking feast at some fellow whose face has been blacked by a burnt cork? No matter: he has never witnessed such a scene of laughter as was witnessed in St. Andrew's Hall at Norwich upon this occasion. The moment the word *Sinking Fund* came out of his mouth, the meeting, as if every man were pulled by one wire, began to laugh. It spread, as a fire does upon a heath, till it got all over the Hall; and here were seven thousand persons, laughing till they were out of breath, holding their sides, holding their heads, putting their hands before their faces; laughing, at last, to see each other laugh: and peal after peal made the roof ring. Soon after this, Mr. Wodehouse drew back; and, indeed, it was high time. It now became my turn, and my turn was the signal for the hirelings to begin their work. First, however, let me insert the Resolutions of Mr. Thurtell and Mr. Watson.

1. "That it appears to this Meeting that the system upon which our national concerns has been hitherto conducted, has at length led to a state of Agricultural Distress, unprecedented and unbearable. That it remains no longer an evil to be anticipated, but has now arrived, and in its progress reduced thousands of agriculturists to abject poverty, and threatens all with a similar fate.

2. "That notwithstanding numerous and explicit representations have been made to the Legislature from this county and many other counties of the United Kingdom, and forcible appeals have been urged for speedy and effectual relief, it appears to this Meeting that no disposition has been shown by his Majesty's Ministers to diminish the pressure of calamity, except by so partial a reduction of taxation as bears no proportion to the cause of complaint, and that the apathy which has thus been developed demonstrates either ignorance of the facts, or an indisposition to apply an efficient remedy.

3. "That this Meeting is convinced the time is now arrived when his duty to himself, to his family, to his country, and to his king, should impel every man boldly, yet respectfully, to declare, not only that taxation is the leading cause of all our national distresses; but that a burden so overwhelming cannot be borne, and ought not to have been imposed.

4. "That from the failure of all the measures recommended by the Agricultural Committee of the House of Commons, this Meeting is furnished with additional reasons for believing that the desirable transition from our present state of distress to future prosperity, cannot result without an abolition of all needless, and therefore useless places, pensions, and sinecures, and such a reduction of

the national debt as is required by the present circumstances of the country, and the imperative claims of public justice.

5. "That the total repeal of the Malt and Beer Tax could not fail to operate both as a relief from a heavy burden, and as an encouragement to the consumption of Barley—an object of great importance to the Agriculturalist; and would also enable the labouring classes to partake of a wholesome beverage at a much cheaper rate.

6. "That Petitions, founded on the foregoing Resolutions, be addressed to both Houses of Parliament early in the next Session, and that the Earl of Albemarle and Lord Suffield be requested to present one to the House of Peers, and the County Members the other to the House of Commons, and to support the prayer of the Petitioners."

These Resolutions appeared to me wholly inadequate to the state of the case. The Seventh Resolution was to contain a proposition for Reform of Parliament. But it was not read along with the rest; therefore, let it be observed, that that Resolution which was to be moved by Sir T. Beevor and seconded by Mr. Ayre, never was moved at all; and of course, was not set aside by my proposition; a thing which I was very glad of, because the frank and every way excellent conduct of Sir Thomas and of Mr. Ayre would have made me regret exceedingly, even the appearance of standing for one moment in opposition to them. The petition which I proposed (and that was finally carried) was in the following words; and when the reader has looked at those words, he will be astonished, perhaps, that the *British Press*

should call it a petition for wholesale robbery and confiscation, and that the *Old Times* should call it a petition charging the clergy with robbery, and calling upon the Parliament to do all sorts of villanous acts. No: the reader will not be astonished; for, if he has been in the habit of looking at these vile papers he will know that they are capable of publishing, in the boldest manner, to-day, that which they assert to be true, and which they well know will, to-morrow, be proved to have been false. He will, therefore, be astonished at nothing that they say or do, unless he should by accident hear truth from them, or detect them in acting fairly and honourably towards the public.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN
PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

*The Petition of the Nobility, Gentry,
and others of the County of Norfolk,
in County Meeting assembled, this
3d day of January, 1823.*

Most humbly Sheweth,

THAT your Petitioners have always been ready to make any sacrifices which were necessary to the defence of their country, and to the safety and dignity of their Sovereign's throne; but that they are now impelled by their well-known, indescribable and unmerited sufferings, to approach your Honourable House with an humble prayer, that you will be pleased to adopt the best means of relieving them from those sufferings.

That, in proceeding to suggest those means, which they do with the greatest respect and deference, your humble Petitioners cannot dis-

guise from themselves, and they will not disguise from your Honourable House, that they entertain a fixed opinion, that this now unhappy country owes all its calamities to the predominance of certain particular families, who, since the passing of the Septennial Act, have, by degrees, appropriated to themselves a large part of the property and revenue of the whole nation, and who have, at last, by taxes, debts and changes in the currency, involved themselves as well as the whole of this industrious community, in difficulties too great to be removed by the hand of Time, or by any but the most Vigorous measures of legislation.

That, whether we look at the Church, the Army, the Courts of Law, the Customs, the Excise, the Colonies, or the Crown-Lands, we see in each a channel of enormous emoluments to these particular families, for whose benefit and aggrandizement, more than for any thing else, the whole of these sources of riches would appear to exist. And that, therefore, though justice and necessity demand a reduction of the interest of the Debt, and an equitable adjustment of all other contracts, your humble Petitioners would deem such reduction an act of deep iniquity, and they deem such adjustment wholly impracticable as long as these particular families enjoy those emoluments, and as long as they retain in the legislature that absolute sway which they have acquired through the means of the Septennial Act, in conjunction with the notorious and scandalous abuses connected with the representation.

That it is well known to your Honourable House, that, for more than twenty years, the particular families received a large part of the above-mentioned emoluments out of the money borrowed from the fundholders; that, during that period, more than a million of

money was taken out of the loans to be given to the Church; and that, in fact, no inconsiderable part of the whole of the loans went into the pockets of these families; and, therefore, your Petitioners will not suppose it possible for your Honourable House to harbour an intention to take even a single shilling from the fundholders, so long as these families shall continue to receive those emoluments.

Your Petitioners, therefore, most humbly pray, that your Honourable House will be pleased to pass an Act for causing an efficient Reform in the Commons' House of Parliament, in order that such Parliament may adopt the measures necessary to effect the following purposes:—

1. An appropriation of a part of the public property, commonly called Church property, to the liquidation of the Debt.
2. A reduction of the Standing Army, including Staff, Barracks and Colleges, to a scale of expense as low as that of the army before the last war.
3. A total abolition of all Sinecures, Pensions, Grants and Emoluments, not merited by public services.
4. A sale of the numerous public estates, commonly called Crown Lands, and an application of the money towards the liquidation of the Debt.
5. An equitable adjustment with regard to the Public Debt, and also with regard to all debts and contracts between Man and Man.

But, while your humble Petitioners are aware, that, to Reform the Commons' House and to effect the other purposes of Justice and necessity, which they have here most respectfully pointed out, may require a lapse of months, they

know, that your Honourable House have the power, and they will not believe that you want the will, to afford them immediate protection against further ruin. They, therefore, seeing the pressing nature of their case; seeing the abject misery that hourly awaits them, pray, that your Honourable House will be pleased,

1. To suspend, by law, for one year, all distraints for rent, and to cause distraints to be set aside where they have been begun.

2. To suspend all process for tithes, for the same period.

3. To suspend, for the same period, all processes arising out of mortgage, bond, annuity, or other contract affecting house or land.

4. To repeal the whole of the tax on Malt, Hops, Leather, Soap, and Candles.

These measures, so analogous to others, taken by your Honourable House under circumstances far less imperious; these measures, so easily adopted; so free from the possibility of inflicting wrong; and, at the same time, so necessary to relieve your Petitioners from the daily alarm in which they live; so necessary to afford them a hope of escaping from the pains and disgrace of the lowest pauperism and beggary: to believe that these measures, measures of bare protection from further wrong and ruin; to believe that these will be refused to your suffering Petitioners, would be to suppose the existence of that callousness of heart which your Petitioners are far indeed from imputing to your Honourable House.

Having thus, with the most profound respect, submitted to your Honourable House those which they deem the best means for relieving their distresses, your hum-

ble Petitioners, though they are satisfied that evils so unusual and of such uncommon magnitude require remedies of a nature extensive and extraordinary, beg leave to assure your Honourable House, that they venerate the Constitution of their fathers; that they seek for no change in the form of the Government; that they know how many ages of happiness and of glory their country enjoyed under a Government of King, Lords, and Commons; that they fervently hope that this Constitution may descend to their children: but that they are fully convinced, that, unless the present evils be speedily arrested and effectually cured, a convulsion must come, in which the whole of this ancient and venerable fabric will be crumbled into dust. And your Petitioners will ever pray.

This Petition was read, and, then, in the shape of an amended resolution, proposed to the meeting. It was here that something of importance happened. But I should notice, first, that, a little after the interrupting platoons began their operations, the Under Sheriff came and delivered to me a message from the High Sheriff, suggesting the necessity, or, perhaps, the utility, *of my retiring a little from the front of the hustings?* To which I answered that the situation of us all was far too painful for us to wish to retain our places any longer than was absolutely necessary; but that, nothing was so far from my thoughts as to turn my back upon a meeting such as that that I there saw, and one that I was sure would approve of the proposition that I had made. Another long demur took place. I made my motion of amendment, which was immediately seconded by Mr. Gibbs. The High

Sheriff objected to the form of my motion. At last, however, all objections were got over, and I contrived, in spite of all opposition, to make the meeting clearly understand the purport of my petition; and to make them also understand the nature of the question about to be put to them. If I cannot say that the division was unanimous, I can affirm the show of hands against it not to have been a third part equal in number to the hundred or hundred and twenty men that had been hired to make the disturbance. I was obliged to turn my head to the right and to the left of the Hall to look for a hat or a hand held up against it.—The High Sheriff declared the petition carried. Then Sir T. Beavor, who really deserves the thanks of the county for his conduct, proceeded to propose that the High Sheriff should be requested to sign the petition on behalf of the meeting, and that the county members should be instructed to present it to the House of Commons and to support the prayers of it.—Here Mr. Coke came forward a second time, and observed, that as they were about to instruct him relative to the presenting a document to the Parliament, he wished to ascertain whether they themselves understood the purport of the two documents that had been presented to them. He then proceeded to notice the resolutions of Mr. Alderman Thurtell, one by one, and to express his approbation of each. He then came to speak of the petition which I had had the honour to propose to the meeting, and expressed his doubts whether the meeting had heard the contents of it. Numerous persons

near me exclaimed, "*We have! we have! and we like it, and we will have it;*"—Mr. Coke having ceased, Sir T. Beavor objected to the irregularity of putting the question again upon both documents, one of which had been so decidedly negatived, and the other of which had been so decidedly approved of. I also expressed my surprise that any gentleman should wish for a re-hearing; but said (and my very words were these), "you have passed the petition; the thing is done; in my hand I hold a copy of your petition and not mine any more than yours; but, from my knowledge of the great respect which you all bear towards Mr. Coke, out of my great respect towards you I will consent that the documents be put again." The Resolutions were then read over once more; and this time in a very audible voice by the Reverend Mr. Glover. The petition was then read (in a very feeble voice; by the Under Sheriff) but, as he proceeded, I took the liberty (in a voice that could be heard) to make those who had not understood it before, understand the substance of it perfectly well. A proposition was now made to put the *resolution* again to the meeting! "That," said Sir T. Beavor, "I will never agree to: it is Mr. Cobbett's amendment that you have to put and nothing else." The amendment was accordingly put in these words; "As many of you as are for the Petition proposed by Mr. Cobbett will please to hold up your hands:" and a forest arose! then the question, "As many of you as are against the Petition proposed by Mr. Cobbett will be pleased to hold up

your hands ;" in counting I got as far as fourteen, but they were down before I could get any further. Out of the seven thousand persons, I do not believe there were *forty*. The motion was then made by Sir T. Beevor, and seconded by Mr. Gibbs, I think, for the signing of the Petition by the Sheriff and for the presenting and supporting of it by the County Members.—What the *Old Times* states about my being conducted to the Inn by a considerable number of persons is true enough ; but in calling these gentlemen "Cobbett's partisans," the *Old Times* is just as true as it generally is. Generally speaking, these gentlemen were, personally, wholly unknown to me. Many of them were capital yeomen of the county, who paid me that mark of attention, because they thought I had been endeavouring, at the least, to do my duty and to render them a service. Such writers as those of the *Old Times* and the *British Press*, may talk as long as they please about "Cobbett's partisans." Men of sense ; and, particularly, the Ministers, will think it wondrous strange that "Cobbett" should be able to make partisans a hundred miles from London in such immense numbers. They will think, as the Prince did of Falstaff, that I carry love-powder about me, or that sort of stuff with which they catch the rats, and that makes them all come out of their holes and dance about the rat-catcher. "Away," will the Ministers say, "with such vile stuff !" Away, too, with that reynard's last shift, that these seven thousand persons *did not know what the petition contained !* Away with this ! For here

are two dreadful horns of a dilemma : they did know what it contained or they did not : if they did, then, knowing its contents, they have approved of them ; and if they did not know the contents, it is their confidence ; their high opinion of, and their implicit confidence in the knowledge, the talent, and the integrity of Mr. Cobbett, that made them receive his proposition and adopt it, even without knowing its contents !" The Ministers will see this dilemma ; and so will every man in the kingdom, these besotted writers excepted.

On Monday I had had time to observe the workings of the press in London, and also that of the very vile press of Norwich, which appears to be, if possible, more corrupt than that of London. On Monday, therefore, I published the following Address to the Yeomanry of Norfolk, in "The Statesman" newspaper. You will perceive that it is very necessary to give all possible circulation to these things. *We do not want to smother. We have truth, we have justice, we have reason on our side. Let those endeavour to smother, who have neither on their side. Let them calumniate ; let them make noises ; let them endeavour to shut the mouths of some and the ears of others.—I now insert my Address of Monday last.*

GENTLEMEN,—Have you ever seen : yes, I am sure you have, and, therefore, I need not ask the question : you have often seen a parcel of *toads*, assembled very thickly, on the surface of a muddy, stagnant and stinking pool ; communing with one another, and reciprocating their filthy breathings and spawnings. You have also seen a large stone, or a brick-bat, flung, suddenly, souse into the midst of such a Collective Wisdom. You have seen how the loathsome devils, some diving, others attempting to leap away, others turned on their backs and showing their nasty white bellies, and all croaking out their alarm, and emitting their poisonous matter. This you have seen : imagine the scene now before your eyes, and you have a true picture of the state of the reptiles of the *London Press*, when they got dashed in amongst them, the Petition of the County of Norfolk.—There is scarcely any species of misrepresentation, falsehood, and calumny which this sink of corruption has not vomited forth against me ; and against you also, for having so decidedly expressed your approbation of the petition which I had the honour to propose.—Gentlemen, this is no more than we had to expect. The occasion was one of so much importance. The subject was so vitally interesting. The feelings were in such a high state of activity and irritation. It will become my duty (now that you have been calumniated) to give to the world the names, characters, callings in life, origin, and motives, of this band of calumniators. However, this shall be done when we have leisure to *disport* ourselves. At

present, we have business on hand. —I have read, since I came to London (it is now Monday, ten o'clock), all that this press has been able to say against our petition. It shall be my business to prove, in the next Register, point by point, the truth of every allegation in the petition, and the *justice* and necessity of every thing for which we pray in that petition. I shall compare the Petition with the Resolutions that it supplanted ; I shall show not only that the Petition was the most proper document of the two to be adopted ; but that, after all the charges of violence preferred against it, it is less violent than the Resolutions. —It is impossible for me to do this, here, in a manner which it becomes me to do it, when I consider that to perform the task is due to you.—I will just observe to you, that the *Morning Chronicle* (the only daily paper that I know of in London worthy of the smallest attention)—but stop—let me correct an error of the press : at the close of the second paragraph of the petition, the printers have, I see, put *rigorous* instead of *vigorous*. I hope that this error will not find its way into the engrossed petition.—Now to the *Morning Chronicle*.—This paper condemns Mr. Thurtell, Mr. Watson, and Mr. Coke, for proposing a reduction of the interest of the debt. This is downright stock-jobbing. This is an endeavour to slaughter the owners of the land. Every estate must go away from the present owner (if he be not a tax-eater) unless that interest be reduced. Therefore, this paper is for a complete revolution in property ; for a total destruction of all rank in society ;

and, indeed, for a total breaking up of this form of government.—It is very curious that this paper should say that I go to work in a *wholesale sweeping way* about the church. Gentlemen, that you may judge of the sincerity of publications of this sort, you have only to be informed of this fact, that this very identical paper has, for many months past, been filling its columns with facts and arguments to show that the whole of the church property, tithes and all, ought to be taken away, and that religion ought to be put upon the same footing here that it is on in Scotland; where, as you very well know, there are no tithes at all. You will recollect also, that Mr. Hume is to bring forward a motion for the abolition of tithes in Ireland, and for the maintaining of the clergy in some other way. Strange, therefore, Gentlemen, that this paper, above all others, should quarrel with your petition.—Just to give you a specimen of the fairness of this London press, the *New Times* says, that you have prayed for seizing all the church and crown lands, and have prayed to have a law passed “to prevent the payment of rent.” But, and I pray you mark this, Gentlemen, he takes care to put the petition in the back of his paper, where he thinks even his readers may not see it! Another thing remark, that all these writers cry out about the disorder and confusion at the meeting; and take this opportunity of representing these popular meetings as not fit for deliberative purposes. Just as if it were you and I who caused the confusion and the want of hearing! Just as if I wished to have myself prevented

from making a speech! This is a pretty way, indeed, of representing the thing. If I had been heard and the other gentlemen had not been heard; then, indeed, there would have been some ground for complaining of foul play on our part; then, indeed, I should not have thought much of the passing of the petition. It might have been fairly said that it had been carried by uproar and violence. But, if the interruption arose from the other side, as our enemies confess that it did: it is clear, then, that it was carried by the good sense of the county, in spite of hired noise. The truth is, that there was no violence at the meeting; there was not a single breach of the peace of any sort; with the exception of the hundred or hundred and fifty lads and young fellows that had been positively hired to prevent me from being heard, it was the most orderly meeting I ever saw in my life; and there was much more wisdom collected together, than there could have been amongst those who have brought you into your present state. Clear it is that it was neither you nor I that caused the interruption to hearing. I was anxious about nothing so much as to be heard. I could not cause, and could not wish for, the interruption. However, the purport of the petition was clearly understood by the meeting, which preserved its good humour in spite of all annoyance, and which passed the petition because they thought it just and necessary.—Gentlemen, before I conclude, let me notice the conduct of some persons of the name of Burks and Kinderbrook, of No. 12,

Cockey-lane, Norwich who publish a paper called the *Norwich Mercury*. These people had got prepared, placards announcing the publication of a cheap pamphlet most grossly reviling me and containing a copy of some of the vilest lies from the *Old Times* newspaper. This was prepared and circulated about by these people under the name of a person who calls himself Bacon, previous to my arrival in Norwich. To this I made no answer, and none is necessary. But, Gentlemen, it is quite necessary for me to observe upon the foulness of the conduct of these persons towards you. They call your meeting a *farce*. They say you agreed to a petition calling for neither more nor less than a *total suspension of payments*: they say that you call for a declaration, by law, of a *general bankruptcy*; they say that you have brought your county to the lowest pitch of degradation. This, Gentlemen, is the treatment that you receive from persons whom you pay to furnish you with true information. These persons are your own *creatures*.—These persons would not have the means of abusing you, and of assisting to complete your ruin, if you did not give them money out of your pockets to carry on their paper and to live upon. How is it possible, Gentlemen, that I can have power over you, to make you do any thing contrary to your own judgments? I have no influence other than that of my pen; and you have surely your eyes to read with and your minds to judge with.—What these people say of me is of very little consequence; but it is of great consequence that they should not be paid by you for

abusing yourselves. I will do my part towards putting a stop to this, which, if permitted to go on would be a real disgrace to the county. You are sensible men; you are active; you know well how to bestir yourselves, and your ALL is at stake.—You can see what immense power the press has; and you ought to resolve not to PAY IT for contributing towards your own ruin. Send me the names of 500 men, who will subscribe for one year to the *NORFOLK YEOMAN'S GAZETTE*, and such a paper shall appear in Norwich (to supply the place of this calumniating *Mercury*) before the Parliament meets. It will be very easy for a dozen or twenty gentlemen from amongst you to meet at Norwich on the next or the next after market-day. You can divide the County into twenty districts, collect the names, with the proper address of each person, and then send the result to me, No. 183, Fleet-street, London. I will take care of the rest; and I will take especial care that the persons who will conduct such a paper shall do nothing to undermine the interests, and calumniate the characters of the yeomen of that famous county, fit, in all respects, to be held up to the imitation of all others.—Consider, Gentlemen, what sort of a publication this would be, compared with the miserable ribaldry for which you now pay. These people have no information; they really know nothing of what is passing; when Parliament is sitting, they give you no account that you can rely upon; or, indeed, that you can understand. Judge how great the advantages would be of having a paper the Editor of which

would be in constant correspondence with me ; and who would be able to give you weekly, something really interesting to yourselves ; at the same time that it took a comprehensive view of things, and enabled you to judge as to all public matters affecting you remotely, as well as nearly. —With this, Gentlemen, I conclude for the present, begging you to be assured that what you have done will produce the most salutary effects.

Gentlemen, sensible and public spirited yeomen of the county of Norfolk, I now come to the merits of our petition. I shall now do, what I should have done in *St. Andrew's Hall*; and which I was prevented from doing, by the consciousness which existed in the breasts of our opponents, that we were right and that they were wrong. I have said that every allegation contained in a petition, ought to be a true allegation ; that every deduction ought to be correct ; that nothing ought to be prayed for, but what is *just and necessary*; and, Gentlemen, if I fail to show, that your petition stands upon these principles, mark me down as a meddling imposter ; nay, expel me from your county ; never suffer me to show my face there again ; and call upon the whole nation to regard me as an outcast. But, Gentlemen, if I show

that your petition stands upon this rock of adamant, I am very sure, that you will not be beaten from that rock ; but that you will stand on it, defend yourselves on it, and never yield a single inch till you have obtained that deliverance from ruin, which you find here and here alone.

Point by point I mean to examine the contents of this petition ; and at every point to *challenge* our adversaries to *answer* me. At every point, to challenge them to *deny my facts* or to *refute my reasoning*. To a combat of *personal abuse*, I by no means challenge them. They have numerous vehicles of falsehood and slander. I challenge them to no such combat as that. I shall number my points, *one, two, three* and *so on* ; if they will *answer* me point by point, then I beseech you to pay attention to all they say ; to give to all they say an attentive and candid consideration ; to weigh well, the *arguments* they shall make use of, in opposition to mine ; and, if you see cause to change your opinion, call another County Meeting in order to express that change of opinion. But, you will not, I am certain, be swayed in your judgment ; be induced to retract your opinions by whole volumes of personal

abuse or loose declamation. Let our adversaries take us point by point. Let them come foot to foot and hand to hand with us; and if they decline to do that, let us conclude, that they are conscious of being in the wrong, and that their only resort is, that of misrepresentation and calumny which we ought to despise.

Now, then, *what are these points?* I divide them into two classes; namely: first, *the allegations in the petition*; and second, the measures which we pray for. The first are, 1. That you have always been ready to make the sacrifices necessary to the defence of the country, and to the safety and dignity of your Sovereign's throne. 2. That your sufferings, at this time, are well known, indescribable, and not merited. 3. That the country owes all its calamities to the predominance of certain particular families, who, since the passing of the Septennial Act, have, by degrees, appropriated to themselves a large part of the property and revenue of the nation, and who have, at last, by taxes, debts, and changes in the currency, produced the evils of which we now complain. 4. That in the Church, the Army, the Courts of Law, the Customs, the Excise, the Colonies,

and the Crown Lands, we see proofs of the predominance of these families. That justice and necessity demand a reduction of the interest of the debt, and an equitable adjustment of all other contracts; but that these would be unjust and impracticable as long as the particular families enjoy their present emoluments, and as long as they retain their present sway in the legislature. 5. That the particular families have received a large part of their emoluments out of the money borrowed from the fundholder; and that a million of money, was taken out of the loans to be given to the Church.

These are the *allegations* of the petition; and now let us see whether they be true; for, if they be false, I have tendered a falsehood for your adoption; and you have degraded yourselves by adopting it. Let us take the allegations then, one by one.

1. *That you have always been ready to make the sacrifices necessary to the defence of the country, and to the safety and dignity of your Sovereign's throne.*

This allegation your opponents will hardly deny; for are there words in our language to express the magnitude of your sacrifices,

and the cheerfulness with which you made them?

2. *That your sufferings, at this time, are well known, indescribable, and not merited.*

Our adversaries will hardly deny this allegation. They will hardly say that your sufferings are not well known, that they are capable of being adequately described by any human being; and they will hardly say that you deserve to undergo those sufferings. We may, therefore, take this allegation for true. Or we may, at least do this, until Messrs. Burks and Kinderbrook of Cockey-lane, Norwich, whom you, at present, pay for calumniating you; until these persons or somebody else, shall undertake to show, that your distresses are *not well known*; that they can be described by pen or tongue; or, that, being well known and indescribable, you merit them; and that it is right, that you should become beggars, and your wives and children along with you, and that you should hold your tongues, too, and not ask to be relieved from that beggary.

3. *That the country owes all its calamities to the predominance of certain particular families,*

who, since the passing of the Septennial Act, have, by degrees, appropriated to themselves a large part of the property and revenue of the nation, and who have, at last, by taxes, debts, and changes in the currency, produced the evils of which we now complain.

This allegation shall rest not upon any thing that I will state, but, upon the statements of a petition, presented to the House of Commons by Mr. GREY (now Lord Grey), on the sixth of May, 1793, which petition was signed by the Duke of BEDFORD, Mr. GREY, Mr. TIERNEY, and a great many other persons of the same description. This petition says:

"Your petitioners must now beg
"leave to call the attention of your
"Honourable House to the greatest
"evil produced by these defects
"in the representation of
"which they complain, namely,
"the extent of PRIVATE PARLIAM-
"ENTARY PATRONAGE; an abuse
"which obviously tends to exclude
"the great mass of the people
"from any substantial influence
"in the election of the House of
"Commons, and which, in its pro-
"gress, threatens to usurp the
"sovereignty of the country, to
"the equal danger of the King, of
"the Lords, and of the Commons.
"The patronage of which your

" petitioners complain, is of two
 " kinds: That which arises from
 " the unequal distribution of the
 " elective franchise, and the pecu-
 " liar rights of voting by which
 " certain places return members
 " to serve in parliament; and
 " that which arises from the ex-
 " pense attending contested elec-
 " tions, and the consequent de-
 " gree of power acquired by
 " wealth. By these two means,
 " a weight of Parliamentary in-
 " fluence has been obtained by
 " certain individuals, forbidden
 " by the spirit of the laws, and in
 " its consequences most danger-
 " ous to the liberties of the people
 " of Great Britain. The opera-
 " tion of the first species of pa-
 " tronage is direct, and subject
 " to positive proof. *Eighty-four*
 " individuals do by their *own im-*
 " *mediate authority* send *one hun-*
 " *dred and fifty-seven* of your
 " honourable members to Parlia-
 " ment. And this your petitioners
 " are ready, if the fact be dis-
 " puted, *to prove*, and to name the
 " members and the patrons. The
 " second species of patronage can-
 " not be shown with equal accu-
 " racy, though it is felt with equal
 " force. Your petitioners are con-
 " vinced, that in addition to the
 " one hundred and fifty-seven
 " honourable members above-men-

" tioned, *one hundred and fifty*
 " *more*, making in the whole *three*
 " *hundred and seven*, are returned
 " to your Honourable House, not
 " by the collective voice of those
 " whom they appear to represent,
 " but by the recommendation of
 " *seventy powerful individuals*,
 " added to the eighty-four before-
 " mentioned, and making the total
 " number of patrons altogether
 " only *one hundred and fifty-four*,
 " who return *a decided majority*
 " *of your Honourable House.*"

Thus then, the fact of *predomi-*
nance can admit of very little
 doubt, unless you should be dis-
 posed to believe, which I am sure
 you will not, that the influence of
 these families has been upon the
decline since this petition was
 presented. You will observe that
 this petition was not only pre-
 sented, but *received*, and ordered
to lie on the table. The French
 war came on immediately after-
 wards, and there the petition has
 lain ever since, without any no-
 tice being taken of it. No man
 attempted to deny its allegations.
 The petitioners subjoined to their
 petition a table enumerating all
 the particulars of the patronage.
 And they have, at the foot of the
 table, these words "Total of Mem-
 bers returned by private pa-
 tronage for England and Wales,

"exclusive of the *forty-five* for
"Scotland, *three hundred and*
"*nine!*"

The fact of the existence of the predominance no one, therefore, will attempt to question; and now for the allegation that this predominance has been the *cause of the calamities* of the country. The petition just mentioned states that the petitioners ascribe the increase of taxes, of establishments, and of the national debt to this predominance. They say this in very plain terms; and therefore they pray that an end may be put to this predominance. I shall presently speak more particularly of the *emoluments*; but must it not be evident to every man that this predominance must naturally lead to a large participation in whatever shall be raised in the way of revenue? The last part of this allegation refers to the *manner* in which this predominance has caused the present calamities. What, Gentlemen, is the nature of the present distress? A want of money in those who pay taxes and who receive none. "All," says Mr. Weston, "must now be ruined: must now lose their estates and their capital, who receive nothing out of the taxes." In fact, there are forty millions a-

than was raised in taxes in 1790; and yet, the prices are really lower than they were in 1790.

This is taking forty millions a-year from the tax-payers to give to the tax-receivers; and this, if suffered to go on, must, in a very short time, make a total revolution in property. Now, then, what do you allege? Why, that those who have had the predominance before-mentioned, and the fact of whose predominance was asserted by Lord Grey and ready to be proved by him; what do you assert, but that this predominance, these predominating persons, have, at last, by taxes, by debts, and by changes in the currency, produced all the calamities that we now witness? Can any one attempt to deny the truth of this allegation; will any one dare to put pen to paper to show that it is not true? Mr. Wodehouse at the very meeting of which I am speaking, admitted in part, at least, the truth of this allegation. He confessed, that the Ministers were in error; that the Parliament were in error; that it was their error that had produced the calamities; but if Mr Wodehouse had clearly understood his subject, he would have confessed that it was the existence of the taxes, which was the real cause of the evil; and, if he had

done that, we should have led him back immediately to that predominance which had been the cause of the taxes. I do not impute wickedness; wicked intention to these particular families, or to any body else. I do not point them out as objects of vengeance, or of hatred, or of contempt; nor do you, Gentlemen. You merely allege, that such has been the case; that this unfortunate predominance has produced such and such effects; that it has finally involved the predominating parties as well as ourselves in these inextricable difficulties; and that, therefore, you can see no hope of relief until this predominance shall be done away with. So much for the third head of allegation. Let our adversaries gainsay, if they please: we are always ready to reply.

4: *That in the Church, the Army, the Courts of Law, the Customs, the Excise, the Colonies and the Crown-Lands, we see proofs of the predominance of these families. That justice and necessity demand a reduction of the interest of the Debt, and an equitable adjustment of all other contracts; but that these would be unjust and impracticable as long as the particular families enjoy their present emoluments, and as long as they retain*

their present sway in the legislature. Now, in the Church, there are *twenty-six* bishops in England, and *eighteen* in Ireland. These together make forty-four. Out of this forty-four, *twenty-three* were (I have no books to refer to later than those of 1820) persons belonging to noble families. The *eleven* bishops in England, belonging to these families, include the two archbishops, and the mighty bishopricks of Durham and Winchester. *Seven* of the other bishops in England, had been tutors to noblemen. In the whole, the revenue of the *twenty-six* bishops is estimated, and pretty well ascertained to be about 296,000*l.* a-year, of which about 157,000*l.* a-year was enjoyed by the *eleven* bishops. To the *seven* bishops fell about 99,000*l.* a-year; and to the *other eight*, about 40,000*l.* a-year. In the whole, the bishops appear to have about 1750 livings, prebendaries, and other pieces of patronage in their gift. Of these, 792 appear to belong to the *eleven* bishops; 606 to the *seven* bishops; and 344 to the *eight* bishops!—Gentlemen, look at this mass of property and power. See whose hands it is in; and ask yourselves whether your allegation be true. Besides this, however, are you to suppose that

the crown-livings are disposed of in a way such as gives no share of them to these particular families? And then, look at Ireland: there were twelve noble bishops out of the eighteen. One of those noble bishops was the Right Reverend Father in God, Percy Jocelyn; and who has been made bishop in his place I cannot tell; but here were twelve out of eighteen; and whether those twelve were the least lucrative, we will not trouble ourselves to inquire. Now, Gentlemen, do you believe that these particular families produce men so much more pious and learned than the rest of the nation? Very pious and very learned they may be; I do not say that they are not; but, if you suppose that these good things are bestowed upon learning and piety, and, from no other consideration; and if you consider the proportion in point of numbers which the particular families bear to the rest of the nation, you must not only suppose them more learned, and more pious, but about five thousand times as learned and as pious as the rest of us, take us in general.

The *Army* contained, according to the *Army-list* of 1819 (and I have none of later date) 141 corps of one sort and another. Each

corps has a *colonel*; and, as nearly as I can ascertain the fact, 99 of these colonels, were either nobles or related to nobles. I am not accusing these persons of wicked intention, or of wrongdoing of any sort; but, I may very reasonably conclude that the army would not be so numerous if it were not for that predominance so explicitly asserted and so fully proved in the petition of Lord Grey.—It is impossible for us to believe that persons so deeply interested in the existence of a large army, will be so ready to consent to a reduction of that army as other persons would be who had not that same interest.

In the *Law*; or, rather, in the offices in the Courts of Law, who do we find to be the persons that receive the largest sums of money? One would think that these persons would be the judges, who are known to possess so much learning, and who really toil like slaves. Far, however, is the fact otherwise than this. In the Court of Chancery, the Lord Chancellor doubtless receives a great deal; and a great deal he ought to receive. I much question, however, if his Lordship receive much more than Lord Thurlow, who has an office in his court for which he receives 5,720*l.* a-year.

I am here referring to an account laid before the House of Commons in the year 1803. If there were any later account I would take that. To give you a list of the whole of the persons who have offices of this sort in the Courts of Law, would require many days. Merely to copy them down would require many days. I shall, therefore, confine myself to a very few instances.—In this same Court of Chancery, there is an office called that of the *clerk* of the Hanaper; and this clerk, who receives 2070*l.* a-year, is, *the sisters of the Earl of Northington!*—In the Scotch Court of Chancery, the *Director* has 1,712*l.* a-year; and this Director is the Earl of Rosslyn, who is a *general* in the army, and the *colonel* of a regiment of Dragoons! But, it is the *clerk* in this court who will surprise you the most; for this clerk is *the children* of the earl of Rosslyn!—In our English Court of King's Bench, where the *judges* (all but the Chief Justice) receive three thousand a-year each, the *chief clerk* (who is, I believe, Lord Ellenborough) receives 7591*l.* a-year; while the honourable Mr Kenyon, who is *filacer* in that court; that is to say, paper-filer, receives 4986*l.* a-year. In the Common Pleas, the Duke of Grafton is *sealer* at 2336*l.* a-year; and the *custos brevium*, that is, *keeper of the briefs*, is the honourable Louisa Browning and Lady B. Mostyn, with a salary of 929*l.* a-year. The present Lord Kenyon and another person are the *custos brevium* in the Court of King's Bench, with a salary of 1861*l.* a-year. In our Court of Exchequer, the earl of Abergavenny and another person are inspector of prosecutions, with a salary of 2000*l.* a-year. I should never have done if I were to go into particulars. I will therefore just add, as to England, that the Comptroller of our Customs inwards and outwards has a salary of 2198*l.* a-year; and that this *comptroller is the daughters of the late earl of Guildford!* In Ireland what can I do more than merely give a list of the surprising things, or, rather, of a few of the surprising things which come under my eye! There is a Mrs. Albina Freemantle who has 722*l.* a-year for taking care of the Parliament House there! The earl of Westmeath is *clerk of the Crown*, 960*l.* Our Earl of Liverpool is *clerk of the Pells*, 3500*l.* Earl Roden and his son, Jocelyn, auditor-general, 3500*l.* The Marquis of Drogheda and a Mr. Bagwell, *muster-master general*; 4000*l.* Two persons of the fa-

mily of Knox, are *prothonotaries* in the Common Pleas; 10,023*l*. The late earl of Buckinghamshire held the Pleas Office in the Exchequer; 11,090*l*. Lord Donoughmore is *searcher*, *packer*, and *gauger* of the port of Galway; 1,006*l*. Earl Roden and his son Jocelyn whom we before saw auditors-general, are a *searcher*, which office (no account of fees) is 605*l*. Two honourable Beresfords are *wine tasters*; 1,000*l*. Lord Gosford and his son, *customer and collector*, 1,500*l*. Honourable Robert Clement *searcher and packer*, 987*l*. Earl of Massereene, *customer* of Belfast, 408*l*. Right Honourable Lord Avonmore, *searcher, packer and guager at Cork*, 901*l*. But, I must stop somewhere, and I may as well stop here; for I could fill ten such pamphlets as this with a mere list of sinecure places and pensions. However, two or three more I must mention. There are Lord Henry and Lord Robert Seymour, brothers of the late Marquis of Hertford, who are *prothonotaries, crown-officers, and filacers* in the Court of King's Bench in Ireland, for which they receive 14,043*l*. a-year; and (what a versatility of talent) Lord Robert is, besides this, a *craner* and a *wharfinger*, for which he

receives 1,930*l*. a-year! These offices they have had as long as I have been alive, come next ninth of March, all but seventy-five days. They have had them more than fifty-six years already; and if there be any truth in arithmetic, they have received in principal money, 894,488*l*. ! There is a sum! If it had been left to work in the hands of the nation, it would now have amounted to several millions. Mr. Bennet said in Parliament last session, that the Grenville family had taken in sinecures and pensions upwards of 800,000*l*. He was, I believe, under the mark; but, the Knoxes, the Beresfords and several others, far surpass the Grenvilles.—Let us now take, just a look at the Colonies. There are the honourable Charles William Wyndham and the Honourable Percy Charles Wyndham, brothers of the Earl of Egremont, who, I think, must have been two of the finest lads that ever breathed the breath of life, for, the former, who was born in 1757, and the latter, who was born in 1760, were appointed; the first at *six years old*, secretary and *clerk of enrolments* in Jamaica, with an income that has been estimated at 5000*l*. a-year; and the second was appointed on the same day;

that is to say, when he was only *three years old, register in the court of Chancery* in that island, with an income that has been estimated at 7000*l.* a-year; but this latter, though only three years old, and capable of being register in the court of Chancery in Jamaica, was on the same day appointed *secretary and clerk of the courts* in the island of Barbadoes, with an income that has been estimated at 5000*l.* a-year. They were both alive in the year 1808, and if they be alive now, and the above estimate be correct, which I believe to be the case, they have had the offices fifty-nine years, and have received 1,003,000*l.* sterling! If the estimates be not correct, it is their own fault, for the House of Commons ordered the sums to be stated, and in defiance of the House, the sums were not stated. I suspect them to be much greater than the estimate which I have above given.—One more, and then I have done. Gentlemen, your neighbour, Lord Braybrooke, whose son has a living of 4000*l.* a-year in the church, was made *Provost Marshal* of the island of Jamaica at twelve years of age. A *Provost Marshal* is a man that has the care of the gaols and prisons: he is gaoler-general of the island. What a bold lad this must have been to undertake such an office at 12 years of age! He has had it a little more than *sixty* years, and it has yielded him 126,000*l.*! This is more than has been bestowed upon the family of Nelson from first to last. Norfolk has had the glory of producing the greatest Admiral that ever lived, and it surely has the glory

of producing the greatest *Provost Marshal* that ever lived.

As to *Crown-lands*, a list of the estates, the manors, farms, houses, mines, and so forth; a bare list of them, would fill five such pamphlets as this. You know that there are many forests, some covered with timber and some not. Well, Gentlemen, to make short work of it, this enormous estate; this patrimony of the kings of England, yielded last year, the *gross sum* of 114,482*l.* and there was paid into the Exchequer out of that, 966*l.*; so that all the money but this mere trifle, went into the hands of those who have pensions or emoluments coming out of it and into the hands of those who have been making plantations, and *carrying into effect the Acts* relating to the crown-lands; so that all that this immense estate yielded last year of clear money, was 966*l.* I beg pardon; there is 13 shillings and four pence more.—Now, Marlborough House, as it is called, in Pall Mall is part of this estate. The Prince of Saxe-Cobourg pays the Duke of Marlborough 3000*l.* a-year for it; and the Duke of Marlborough pays the public 62*l.* a-year for it! The Duke of Buckingham's house in Pall Mall, is worth a good 700*l.* to 1000*l.* a-year. They have had it for forty-five years. They paid 15*l.* a-year to 1808; and since that time they have paid 54*l.* a-year. You have all heard of Fife House, Gentlemen. That is where our great prime minister lives. It belongs, or did, a little while ago, belong to the Earl of Fife. It has gardens, and it has the land down into the Thames to low-water mark. It is just opposite the Treasury at White Hall. It is

worth any money. 2000*l.* a-year at the least farthing. They have the whole for 46*l.* a-year from the public; and they have had it amongst them for fifty-eight years! —I will trouble you with no more. Here is a sufficiency to show what an immense property this is; and to show also how much it might be made to do in the liquidation of the debt.

Now, the other allegation contained under this head, Number 4, is, that justice and necessity demand a reduction of the interest of the debt, and an equitable adjustment of all other contracts; but that these would be unjust and impracticable as long as the particular families enjoy their present emoluments. And is not this *true*, Gentlemen? Would it be possible to find a man with face enough to propose to take away any part of the income of the fundholder, so long as these emoluments remained untouched?

5. The fifth allegation is, that *the particular families have received a large part of their emoluments out of the money borrowed from the fundholder; and that a million of money was taken out of the loans to be given to the Church.*

During the last sixteen years, more than a million of money has been voted to the Church, to relieve the *Poor Clergy* of the Church. I have not all the yearly accounts by me; but I know that the granting of 100,000*l.* a-year began with Perceval; and I am sure that the grants exceed 1,000,000*l.* Now, this sum was *charged to the nation* every year. The nation was a *debtor* and a *borrower* every year; and, of course, this given away sum must

be looked upon as having come out of the money borrowed. If I have an estate that yield me 100*l.* every Christmas: if I have *debts to pay* to just the amount of 100*l.* every Christmas; if I give away 10*l.* every Christmas, and borrow 10*l.* every Christmas, the sum given away must be looked upon as coming out of the money borrowed; because, I *owe* the 100*l.*; therefore that belongs to my creditors, and not to me to give away. In just the same light are we to regard all the money paid away in sinecures, pensions and grants not due to public services. The nation wanted all its taxes to carry on the war with; it wanted all of them and more too; for it was compelled to borrow. This proves that it had nothing to give away out of its taxes; then what it did give it must have given out of the loans. If it could not have borrowed, would it have suffered its army to go unpaid rather than not give the money for the sinecures? Certainly not; and, therefore, the payment of those sinecures came out of the loans for many, many years, and not out of the taxes. What, then, shall we call upon our friends and neighbours who have money in the funds, to give up part of their interest, as long as these persons continue to receive the amount of these sinecures? Oh, no! and therefore have you promulgated through the means of your petition, your abhorrence of the idea of taking even a single shilling from the fundholders, so long as these families shall continue to receive those emoluments. And here it is, Gentlemen, particularly, that I prefer the Petition to the Resolutions. The resolu-

tions do not distinctly protest against a reduction of the debt, unaccompanied with an abolition of the sinecures. The resolutions do, indeed, propose to pray for an abolition of these enormous emoluments; but it does not positively say that you wish for no reduction of the debt, unless those emoluments be abolished.

So much for the allegations of the petition: if our adversaries want more, it is what no impartial man will want; but if more were necessary, more is always at hand; for the difficulty is, not the want of proof, but the want of room and time to utter the innumerable proofs that are always at hand. We now come to the *prayers* of the petition. And what are these? In the first place, to reform the Parliament, in order that the other things may be done which are necessary to the nation. When I hear any argument given against appropriating a part of the church property to the liquidation of the debt; against reducing the standing army; against an abolition of sinecures; and against a sale of the crownlands, and an application of the money to the liquidation of the debt: when I hear any thing like argument against these, it will then be quite time enough to say something beyond the bare proposition. I am of opinion that no man living can offer an argument against either of them; and, therefore, I shall take it for granted, that they stand in need of no defence.

With respect to the *interest of the debt*; pray, Gentlemen, observe, that it is an *equitable adjustment* for which you pray. Strange words to be made to

mean robbery, plunder, confiscation and revolution. You have been charged with praying for these, and you have prayed for an equitable adjustment. Now observe how you stand with regard to your opponents at the meeting. Mr. Alderman Thurtell proposed to you to pray for a *reduction of the national debt*. Mr. Wodehouse disapproved of Mr. Thurtell's resolution, but Mr. Wodehouse said that *he wanted the plan of Mr. Western*; that is to say, a plan which Mr. Western himself says is intended solely to produce a *reduction of the interest of the debt*; for Mr. Western's pamphlet is written for nothing but to prove the justice and necessity of making this reduction. Mr. Thurtell, backed by Mr. Coke, is for a reduction of the interest as well as we are; but he omits to explain himself clearly, and omits, also, every concomitant measure. He is for doing it openly, but, as I deem it, unadvisedly; and, indeed, unjustly, if he leave the property of the church untouched. Mr. Wodehouse is for reducing the interest *clandestinely*; in a sly covert manner. He is for no equitable adjustment; fair, honest adjustment: but for a measure that would despoil of their property a new class of sufferers, and that would again plunge the labouring classes and particularly the manufacturers into the deepest misery. He is for declaring an unqualified bankruptcy; for putting forth an emission of assignats; and to make the whole country a scene of uproar and confusion. So that both these parties want a reduction of the interest of the debt as well as you. This they want, at any

rate. Therefore, no argument can be necessary to prove the justice of it to them; and as to other persons, it is sufficient for us to say, we will look at your objections when we have leisure; but, in the county of Norfolk, though there were three parties of us, all differing materially in other respects; though some of us could be heard and some of us could not be heard; all the three parties of us agreed in this, that a reduction of the interest of the debt is just and necessary. John Calcraft, Esquire, may, therefore, make up his mind, before he take his ride into *Kent*, to find no party, let the parties differ how they may in other respects, to object to a proposition for a reduction of the interest of the debt. This is very material, Gentlemen, for you to bear in mind. It will be material, also, for Mr. Coke and Mr. Wodehouse to bear in mind when they present your petition; that Mr. Thurtell, Mr. Watson, Mr. Coke, Mr. Wodehouse and you were all for a reduction of the interest of the debt. Happy I am that we have their sentiments down in black and white: Mr. Thurtell's and Mr. Coke's you have in the resolutions; and the declaration of Mr. Wodehouse can be attested by five thousand persons. His precise words were these: "I voted for Mr. Western's motion last year, and I still think that his plan ought to be adopted." Now, then, Mr. Western's plan is to take away more than half the interest of the debt, and at the same time to leave the church, to leave the particular families, to leave the army and the whole of those enormous expenses untouched!

It remains for me, Gentlemen, to speak of that part of your prayer, which relates to the measures necessary for immediate relief. These measures are three in number; a *suspension of distrains*; a *suspension of process for tithes*; a *suspension of process arising out of mortgage or other lien upon land*: a suspension of all these for one year. Messrs. Burks and Kinderbrook, whom you have the goodness to pay for abusing you; these gentlemen who live in Cockey-lane at Norwich, and who publish calumnies against you and me under the name of a person who calls himself Bacon; these persons have called this proposition for suspension, praying for a law to *put an end to payments*; and they have further called it a declaration of general bankruptcy. Gentlemen, you say in your petition, that these measures are *analagous to others, taken by the House under circumstances far less imperious*. Now, then, Gentlemen, is not this true? And if it be true, how are we easily to express, in terms of suitable reprobation, our opinion of the conduct of these Messrs. Burks and Kinderbrook?

You pray for a suspension of the law in certain cases for one year. Has no law ever been suspended before? In the year 1799, actions were commenced against great numbers of the parsons of the Church of England for gross neglect of their duty and daring defiance of the law in absenting themselves from their livings. The law was clear; the penalty specific; the charge undeniable. And what did the parsons do under those circumstances? They petitioned the Parliament to *suspend the operation of the law*! The law

was suspended; the proceedings were arrested for two years; and finally they were *quashed by law*! And, are we to believe that these same gentlemen would now have the conscience to find fault of you for asking for a law to suspend for one year their power of taking your beds from under you! This would be pretty charity indeed. This would be to set a most amiable example of Christian candour and benevolence.

We have seen suspended the laws which protect our persons from false imprisonment. We have seen these laws suspended for seven years together. We have seen scores of men shut up in gaol under that suspension; kept there, some for one year, some two, some three, some four, and at last let out without ever knowing what crime had been alleged against them or who was their accuser. And are we to be reprobated, then, because we pray that for one twelvemonth the nearly ruined farmer may be safe in his house, when it is notorious that the landlord has been for years getting the money out of his pocket! Messrs. Burks and Kinderbrook, whom you pay for abusing you, never called it a declaration of general bankruptcy, when the law was suspended, and the Bank was enabled to fling depreciated paper at its creditors instead of paying them in gold. What! shall there be no suspension of law except for the benefit of bankers; shall a suspension there be proper; be deemed to be for the public good; shall all law give way for the sake of that system which has brought the ruin upon you; that has taken away your money at last and put

it into the pocket of the landlord; and shall there be no law to save your very bed beneath you from the grasp of that landlord? This Messrs. Burks and Kinderbrook, with the very money that you give them, purchase paper and ink to enable their agent Bacon to represent your prayer as something monstrous, while they say not a word, about the Act that was past last year in *eight-and-forty hours* for shutting Irish farmers up in their houses from sunset to sunrise; and for *transporting* them, (if they transgressed) *without trial by a jury*. That was a *suspension law*. And can those who can pass suspension laws like this, not pass a law to suspend restraints for one year, and to suspend the power of the mortgagee, in order that the occupier may not be despoiled of his goods and the owner of his estate?

To hear Messrs. Burks and Kinderbrook; to hear them abuse you, who pay them; to hear them reviling you as calling for a suspension of all payments, one would think, that they had just dropped down from the clouds, or, at most, that they had not been in England above a week. Not so with you, Gentlemen: you know that in 1812, Lord King, having distrained, or being about to distrain upon some of his tenants, for insisting on paying him in depreciated paper instead of paying him in gold agreeably to their contract; you will recollect, Gentlemen, that upon that occasion, and to restrain this *just* landlord; this landlord that wanted no more than his due; an Act was passed to prevent landlords from distraining, if the tenant offered

them the paper that was notoriously depreciated. With this fact in your minds; with this matter of history before you; what must be your indignation at being represented as robbers, only because you ask for a *suspension* of the terrible power of distraint; only because you ask for protection for your bare beds until there shall have been time for an equitable adjustment of all contracts between man and man?

I have trespassed much too long upon your time, Gentlemen. I have said much more than was necessary. But, in conclusion, I cannot help making one remark applicable to what may connect itself with the future progress of your petition. You perceive, that great stress was laid by Mr. Coke upon the circumstance, of your *not having*, all of you, *heard the petition distinctly read*. Great stress was laid upon this. But, I am very much deceived if such an objection will be urged in the House of Commons. Mr. Coke has probably been present at *ten thousand* readings of Bills in his lifetime. He has voted for many Bills in his lifetime; and I put it to Mr. Coke, as a man of honour, whether he ever heard a Bill; whether he ever heard one single Bill of any length, *read through* in the House of Commons? It is notorious that they are seldom or ever read by the members of the House or to the members of the House. The Bill, of which I have spoken above for shutting up the Irish in their houses, went through *six readings*, within eight-and-forty hours. No man living could, in an audible voice, read the Bill

six times through in eight-and-forty hours. It is a large volume, containing nearly as much print as the New Testament, if not quite. It was read, as they call it, *pro forma*; that is to say, the title of it was read to the House. And your petition was read *pro forma*; and this will do, in case of a petition, surely, if it will do in case of a *law*! It will, therefore, be amusing enough if we should hear the petition objected to, because some one may say that it was not heard distinctly all through by the meeting. Why, Gentlemen, if the House of Commons were to sit and hear read through all the Bills that they pass, they would, I assure you, have very little time for debating. They pass laws every year to the tune of about forty times the contents of the New Testament. Let them sit and hear all that read over three times, and the newspapers would have very little trouble in reporting their speeches. The fact is this: those who bring in a Bill are believed to know the contents of it. If the majority have confidence enough in the bringer in of the Bill to vote for it, it becomes a law; if they have not, it is rejected and does not become a law. At the meeting, many of you, certainly, did not hear the petition read through; but your confidence in the proposer induced you to vote for it, nevertheless; and it is your petition, as much as ever any law that was passed was the law of the Parliament.

Permit me to congratulate you on the prospect which you have opened to your country. You have set an example of moderation, good sense, discernment, justice, and public spirit which can-

not fail to have a most salutary effect. You may be fairly deemed the representatives of all the yeomen of England. No man in England knows their sentiments better than I do, and no man better knows, or more acutely feels for, their distresses. To be a farmer has been the utmost aim of my ambition; to assist farmers in the hour of their calamity is a duty which I perform with more zeal than I ever performed any other: zealous in every thing I undertake, I have into this cause brought an unusual portion of zeal, and if I fail of success, the fault will be in others and not in myself.—With every sentiment belonging to respect and affection,

I remain,

Your most obedient and

Most humble servant,

WM. COBBETT.

TO MR. COBBETT.

Liverpool, 30th Dec. 1822.

SIR,

As a political writer, you certainly take an able and comprehensive view of our situation, but writing on the markets you seem not at home, or perhaps are misinformed by some interested person. Allow me to say this in regard to your remarks upon Butter for some time past—where not only wrong conclusions were drawn and facts perverted, but prices considerably under the current rate of London market are quoted. Belfast (which is the favourite Butter here, as we do not use Dutch or Carlow) is quoted at 76s. in London, whereas it is

known that 80s. has been paid there for the last fortnight, and even it cannot be had at that rate without taking a very large proportion of low qualities, which are very unsaleable. I allow that the imports into London this year are greater than the last; but this is accounted for by very extensive and early speculation there, which caused the export from Ireland to be earlier than former years, as it is allowed that that country is more drained of Butter now than it has been for some years before at a similar date. But if London has over imported, we are much deficient up to this time; we are * 42,000 firkins less than last season, and Preston 10,000 firkins deficient; this I believe is generally the case, except to London, as the exports from Ireland are less. In Cork, which is the largest market, they are † 46,000 firkins less than to this period last year. These facts may make you inquire further; and you will find Liverpool houses have been forced to go to London for a supply, when in former years they have had a large surplus to send there.

Butter, I contend, is an article of luxury, and no connexion with the prices of other provisions, except they being cheap, affords the country a better opportunity of indulging in the use of Butter.

I beg to remark, although I have been in that trade thirty years, yet at this time I am not at all interested in it.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. R.

* See Myer's Import List.

† See Southern Reporter.

THE only part of our Correspondent's Letter which in any respect impugns the correctness of our reports on the Markets, is that in which he charges us with stating the price of Belfast butter at 76s. at a time when none could be bought at less than 80s. It is quite needless for us to say to those who are acquainted with the London trade, that W. R. must have been imposed upon by some "*interested person*;" for we have reason to believe that he is a very respectable man, and incapable of making an *intentional* misrepresentation. But, in justice to ourselves, we must observe that W. R. is in error in supposing *us* to be under the influence of some "*interested person*:" we are under no influence but that of a desire to publish the truth; and we have not only the consciousness of having so done, but the satisfaction of knowing that the most respectable part of the trade approve of our endeavours. We do not dispute the correctness of W. R.'s statement of the deficiency in the country supplies; though we cannot exactly see how that proves any thing against us; especially as W. R. admits that our statement of the excess *here* is *correct*. The truth is, that we have very cautiously abstained from hazarding opinions of our own; confining ourselves to a simple statement of *facts*, and of the opinions entertained by the best judges in the trade: and we venture to think (with submission) that the state of the trade, at this moment, is a pretty strong corroboration of the justness of the remarks we have from time to time thought it our duty to make. We are not dealers

in Butter; but we know that any of the different kinds of which we have published the prices, could have been bought here at the prices stated by us; and if W. R. will let us know at what Banker's in London we can obtain payment, we will undertake at any time to find him butter at the prices we quote. For the sake of the holders *here*, we rejoice at the fact stated by W. R. namely, that 42,000 firkins are wanted at Liverpool: and we are sure that orders for *half that quantity*, would diffuse joy over the whole trade here. But we fear that such orders are not to be expected, as some of the Liverpool merchants have found it necessary to seek a market in London. We agree with our Correspondent that *good* butter is a luxury; and therefore we are anxious that too much at a time should not be brought to market.

MARKETS.

Average Prices of CORN throughout ENGLAND, for the week ending 28th December.

Per Quarter.

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Wheat	39	9
Rye	24	5
Barley	29	3
Oats	18	7
Beans	28	8
Peas	30	0

Corn Exchange, Mark Lane.

Quantities and Prices of British Corn, &c. sold and delivered in this Market, during the week ended Saturday, 28th December.

	Qrs.	£.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Wheat	5,295 for 11,587	12	6	Average, 43	9	
Barley	3,277	5,175	0	11	31	7
Oats	13,950	14,810	6	5	21	2
Rye	—	—	0	0	—	—
Beans	1,113	1,410	14	2	25	4
Peas	547	857	7	10	31	4

SMITHFIELD, Monday, Jan. 6th.

Per Stone of 8 pounds (alive).

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Beef	3	0	to 3	8
Mutton	3	0	— 3	6
Veal	4	0	— 5	0
Pork	3	0	— 4	0
Lamb	0	0	— 0	0

Beasts ... 2,591	Sheep ... 19,330
Calves 130	Pigs 300

NEWGATE (same day).

Per Stone of 8 pounds (dead).

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Beef	2	0	to 3	0
Mutton	2	2	— 2	6
Veal	3	0	— 5	0
Pork	2	4	— 3	8
Lamb	0	0	— 0	0

City, Jan. 8, 1823.

BACON.

The dealers are still in doubt. To-day the sellers are inclined to take 26s. on board, and the buyers hesitate: to-morrow the buyers show a disposition to take at 26s. and then the sellers ask 27s. or 28s. Thus is the trade exposed to all the consequences of continual fluctuation. There is very little here;

and yet the price does not advance. 30s. to 32s. landed are asked. In old nothing is doing.

BUTTER.

There is a great deal still coming in; and from Holland the supplies are expected to be very large. That which is really good can be readily sold; but of that description the proportion is very small indeed. Though the demand for the stock here is very slack, that which is on passage is not worth so much as that which is landed; a convincing proof of the opinion entertained by the trade with respect to the future.

Carlow, 80s.—Waterford, 71s. to 73s.—Belfast, 76s.—Dublin, 72s. to 74s.—Cork and Limerick, 70s.—Dutch, 98s. to 100s.—Holstein, 72s. to 76s.

CHEESE.

No alteration since our last.

Price of HOPS, per Cwt. in the BOROUGH.

Monday, Jan. 6.—There is but little doing in New Hops, but there is no alteration in the currency. Rather more inquiry for old pockets, at low prices. Good Sussex pockets are scarce. Currency—Sussex bags, 40s. to 50s.; pockets, 50s. to 56s.; Kent pockets, 56s. to 75s.; bags, 50s. to 80s.

Maidstone, Jan. 2.—We have so few Hops brought for sale that we hardly know how to call it a market; the demand appears equally small, and in consequence the Trade is quite at a stand, but the prices are getting lower.